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December 13, 1961

AEC 141/51

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ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

PROBLEMS OF NUCLEAR TESTING NEAR ENIWETOK  
AND BIKINI ATOLLS

Note by the Secretary

1. The attached exchange of correspondence between the Chairman and the Secretary of the Interior is circulated for the information of the Commission.
2. The matter has been referred to the General Manager for appropriate action.

W. B. McCool

Secretary

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UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

December 6, 1961

Dear Mr. Seaborg:

This acknowledges your November 27\*letter regarding the problems of nuclear testing near Eniwetok and Bikini Atolls.

I am pleased to learn that you are exploring other means and locations in the hope that it will not be necessary to utilize Islands in the Trust Territory. Your cooperation is indeed appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

Stewart L. Udall  
Secretary of the Interior

Hon. Glenn T. Seaborg  
Chairman  
Atomic Energy Commission  
Washington 25, D. C.

Department of Energy  
Historian's Office  
ARCHIVES

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\*Attached

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UNITED STATES  
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

November 27, 1961

Dear Mr. Udall:

I have considered the comments made by Mr. Carr in his letter of November 3.\* You will recall that on November 2, President Kennedy announced that the United States would make necessary preparations for atmospheric tests of nuclear weapons so as to be ready in case it becomes necessary to conduct them in order to maintain our superior capability for the defense of the Free World against any aggressor.

Further, he stated that no nuclear test would be conducted by the United States for "so-called" psychological or political reasons and should nuclear tests be deemed necessary to maintain our responsibilities for Free World security, they would be undertaken only to the degree that orderly and essential scientific development of new weapons has reached a point where effective progress is not possible without such tests -- and only within limits that restrict the fallout from such tests to an absolute minimum.

We are very much aware of the problems which could be raised if it became necessary to resume the use of Eniwetok and Bikini Atolls for nuclear testing, and are appreciative of the responsibilities of the United States toward the people of Micronesia serving from our position as Administrator of the Trusteeship Territory. We are exploring other means and locations in the hope that, in event it is necessary to conduct atmospheric testing, it would not be necessary to utilize Islands in the Trusteeship Territory, and I sincerely hope such means can be found.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

Glenn T. Seaborg  
Chairman

The Honorable Stewart L. Udall  
Secretary of the Interior

Department of Energy  
Historian's Office  
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\*Circulated as AEC 141/50